

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form**

APR 10 1989

**NATIONAL
REGISTER**

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Community Development of Prestonsburg, c. 1815-1945


C. Geographical Data

Corporate Limits of Prestonsburg, Floyd County, Kentucky

☐ See continuation sheet

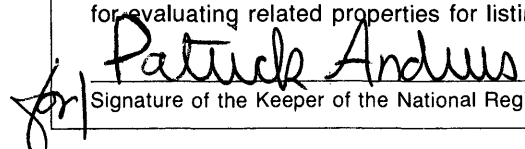
D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.


Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan
State Historic Preservation Officer, Commonwealth of Kentucky
State or Federal agency and bureau

4-3-89
Date

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.


Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

5/18/89
Date

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number E Page 1

The city of Prestonsburg, Kentucky (1980 population: 4,800), seat of Floyd County, is situated in Kentucky's rugged, mountainous and sparsely settled eastern region. Prestonsburg occupies a narrow crescent of level land, containing approximately 250 acres, along the east bank of the Big Sandy River's Levisa Fork, surrounded by steep, wooded hills. Although a limited amount of residential construction has taken place on the lower slopes of the hills, most of the city's development has been confined to this terrace; a pattern that is typical of eastern Kentucky towns. Prestonsburg's street pattern, also characteristic of cities in eastern Kentucky, is characterized by a grid of narrow streets. This regularity of this pattern is occasionally interrupted by roadways that curve around the base of the hills and by alley-like "lanes," some of which accommodate vehicular traffic and some which serve as walkways. The city's main north-south thoroughfare is U. S. 23-460, labeled Lake Drive within the city limits. Its main east-west artery is County Road 114, which connects with the Bert T. Combs Mountain Parkway west of the town. Floyd County is served by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, whose tracks parallel the west bank of the Levisa Fork. The area's economy is based on coal mining, oil and gas production, and logging.

The early development of Prestonsburg was centered on the river. As a result, the majority of its historic buildings can be found along the streets that parallel the river, Front Street and Arnold Avenue, between Route 114 and Graham Street. Over time, the city gradually expanded to the north, east and south. However, development continued to take place in all areas of the city, so it is not uncommon to find older buildings intermingled with much newer ones, and most city blocks include a variety of buildings of varied scale, massing and style, constructed over fifty or even a hundred years' time.

Community Development of Prestonsburg, c. 1815 - 1945

Early Development of the Prestonsburg area, c. 1790-1859

The recorded history of Prestonsburg, one of the oldest towns in the Big Sandy valley, begins in the late 1700's. In 1791, pioneer John Spurlock is said to have built the first house in the vicinity. Five years later, John

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number E Page 2

Preston conducted a survey of 800 acres of land in the area. John Graham, deputy surveyor for Mason County, purchased this 800-acre tract and named the fledgling settlement "Preston's Station." On May 3, 1797, Preston's Station officially became the town of Prestonsburg. At the time of its incorporation, it had only six residents. In 1800, Floyd County was formed from sections of Mason, Montgomery and Fleming Counties, with Prestonsburg as its seat of government. The new county, which was the fortieth created by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, took its name from Colonel John Floyd, pioneer and Indian fighter. It is interesting to note that at the time of its formation, Floyd County was much larger than its present size and included the present-day counties of Pike, Johnson, Martin, Letcher, Magoffin and Perry Counties, as well as sections of seven other eastern Kentucky counties.

Because of its extreme isolation, the Big Sandy region remained a virtual wilderness. Its only roads were buffalo traces, and supplies were brought in by pack-mules or on flatboats. Nonetheless, signs of civilization slowly began to appear. In 1802 the state legislature funded the construction of a road from the town of Mount Sterling in central Kentucky to the "Virginia Road," which extended east from the Big Sandy valley. By the early 1800's (the exact date has not been determined) Prestonsburg was part of the Big Sandy circuit of the Methodist Church, served by traveling preachers. In 1818 the town's first business, a general store and tannery operated by a man named David Cooley, opened its doors. On January 13, 1820, Prestonsburg's first school, the Prestonsburg Academy, was established by the Kentucky Legislature. Another milestone was reached in 1837 when a steamboat first traveled the Big Sandy to Prestonsburg. This new mode of transportation represented a marked improvement over earlier ones, and eventually four landings would be established in the town. During the 1840's the area's rich deposits of bituminous coal, which had been discovered a century earlier, first began to be exploited. Coal was first used for steamboat fuel and later for home heating. Despite these advances, Prestonsburg in 1850 was still a very small town, with only three streets and 20 or 30 buildings. With the exception of the previously-mentioned Samuel May House (FD-23), which was located well outside the city at the time of its construction, no buildings dating from this period appear to have survived to the present day.

Mid-to-Late Nineteenth Century Development in Prestonsburg, 1860-1902

In 1886, Prestonsburg had 100 residents. By 1890, its population had reached 305. A photograph of the city taken in 1887 depicts a town of white clapboard houses, widely scattered, surrounded by plowed fields.

The Civil War had a disruptive influence on the town. At the height of the conflict, many students left school for the army. Skirmishes fought nearby included the battles of Jenny's Creek and Middle Creek, both of which took place in January of 1862. During these conflicts Colonel James A. Garfield commandeered the home of John Burns (no longer extant), an attorney and

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number E Page 3

politician, as his temporary headquarters. Local tradition states that Garfield liked Burns' house so much that he purchased it after the war was over. But there is no evidence he ever lived in it. The city saw action of a different sort in 1863 when General John Hunt Morgan of the Confederate Army, in the midst of his last Kentucky campaign, camped out for three days in the home of Solomon De Rosset (no longer standing) on Front Street.

During the post-Civil War years the development of Floyd County's coal resources began on a larger scale, and far-sighted residents began to reap great profits from the purchase of mineral rights and their re-sale to coal operators. Among those who made their fortunes in this manner was Walter S. Harkins, an attorney and banker who collaborated with John C. C. Mayo of neighboring Johnson County while the latter was building his coal empire.

In the years after the war, Prestonsburg gradually evolved from a small settlement into an established town with commercial, financial, religious and educational institutions of its own. In 1869, Isaac Richmond and his sons opened a general store on Front Street north of Court. In 1890 the city's first financial institution, the Bank Josephine, opened its doors. Its establishment was related to the infusion of new money into the city's economy from the development of the area's coal resources. The Bank Josephine was named by its founder Walter S. Harkins in honor of his wife Josephine Davidson, and certificates of stock bore her likeness. This savings institution was the second to open in eastern Kentucky. In 1873, the Prestonsburg Academy and Normal School opened its doors. The Academy and Normal School was the successor of the Prestonsburg Academy, which was destroyed by fire after the war. The area's first institution of higher learning, the East Kentucky and Prestonsburg Normal College, opened in 1891. The city's first religious organization, the Methodist Episcopal Church South, was founded in 1883. In 1891, a Presbyterian congregation was established.

The Coming of the Railroad and its Impact on Prestonsburg, 1903-1919

A milestone in the city's commercial history occurred in 1903 when the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad opened a line through the city, with a passenger and freight depot in West Prestonsburg (no longer extant). The railroad provided a new impetus for the city's development. It gave the city access to a much wider variety of goods and building materials from distant markets and facilitated the shipping of coal from area mines, resulting in greater profits for operators.

The impact of the coming of the railroad is clearly visible in the city's built environment. Buildings constructed after the turn of the century assume more stylish pretensions and employ more varied and expensive materials than those built before 1900. The increasing scale of both residential and commercial buildings constructed during this era also appears

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number E Page 4

to be a reflection of the city's new well-being. For further discussion of the impact of the railroad on Prestonsburg, refer to Section F.

In 1904 the city's second financial institution, the First National Bank, built a new headquarters (no longer standing) on the west side of Front Street opposite Court Street. 1914 saw the construction of a new home for the Isaac Richmond Store (FD-58). This new three-story brick building, located on the east side of Front Street south of Court, was the city's largest mercantile building to date. In the same year, Walter S. Harkins built a Neo-Classical stone edifice (FD-2) to house his family's law firm. Two years later, the Bank Josephine constructed a new headquarters (FD-1) at the northeast corner of Court and Front Streets.

Prestonsburg's religious organizations reflected the city's growth. In 1902 the Presbyterian church of Prestonsburg built its first permanent home on Central Avenue (FD-59). Five years later a Baptist group, the Irene Cole Memorial Church, was founded. In 1917, following a successful revival that swelled the ranks of its congregation, the Methodist Church South began construction of a new house of worship (FD-6) on South Arnold Avenue north of Graham Street.

The Boom Years, 1920-1940

Beginning in the 1920's, the exploitation of the area's coal reserves on an unprecedented scale brought new prosperity and dynamic growth to eastern Kentucky towns. By Floyd County, with 62 mines in operation, was the state's fourth-largest producer of coal, its output exceeded only by Bell, Harlan and Pike Counties. Prestonsburg shared in this new boom. By 1926 its population had reached 3,000, an increase of nearly 1,000% over its 1900 total of 409.

In the early 1920's, Floyd County's isolation was ended by the first major road improvement in over 100 years. U. S. 23 (also called the "Mayo Trail"), a paved two-lane road, connected Prestonsburg with the counties of Johnson, Lawrence and Boyd to the north as well as Magoffin and Pike to the west and south. It also provided ready access via connecting roads to points in southern Ohio and northern Kentucky. Another major transportation improvement took place toward the end of the decade when the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad commissioned the building of two highway bridges across the Levisa Fork at opposite ends of the town, providing rail travelers with easier access to their West Prestonsburg depot.

To accomodate the new residents, numerous new subdivisions were platted on the hitherto undeveloped edges of the town. New developments included the Garfield and Arnold and Spradlin Additions on North Arnold Avenue, and the Richmond and Harmison Addition on lower Central and Maple Avenues. Property values, which had remained comparatively modest prior to 1920, skyrocketed

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number E Page 5

accordingly. While Isaac Richmond had purchased 81 1/2 acres for only \$2,000 in 1874, in 1914 an average 60 x 150 lot in his namesake subdivision sold for \$750. By 1925 that same parcel, on which a dwelling had yet to be built, cost \$1,950. Stylish new homes were built for attorneys B. F. Combs (FD-68) and Joseph D. Harkins (FD-69), among others, on North Arnold Avenue. New commercial buildings constructed during the decade included the Hughes Building (1927) on Front Street, built on speculation by druggist John Hughes (FD-1); the Combs and Combs Building next door (FD-1); a "motion picture" theatre on Court Street; and new Pure Oil filling stations at the north and south ends of town. By 1926, there were four hotels in operation in the city. New retail enterprises included the Ben Franklin and Leader stores on Court Street. The city's growth was reflected in the school system, and in 1922 its first public high school (FD-74), located on the west side of North Arnold Avenue, opened its doors.

The advent of the Great Depression brought difficult times to Floyd County. Historian Henry Scalf details how erosion and poor farming practices took their toll on surrounding cropland; once-abundant timber reserves ran out, curtailing the logging industry; and coal production dropped as seams were exhausted. Nonetheless, a limited amount of building in Prestonsburg continued. The Fraternal Order of Odd Fellows constructed a new headquarters on Front Street in 1931 (FD-1), and the Auxier Hotel built a new three-story building next door to the Odd Fellows lodge in the same year (FD-1). Although residential construction appears to have been slowed by the economic downturn, it did not halt altogether. Some, like physician Grover D. Callihan, simply constructed their homes in stages as circumstances permitted (FD-67). During the Depression years Prestonsburg, like countless other towns across the nation, benefitted from the public works programs of the New Deal. Under the auspices of the Work Projects Administration, the city's first paved sidewalks were constructed during the late 1930's, and a new grade school was completed in 1940.

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type _____

II. Description

III. Significance

IV. Registration Requirements

☒ See continuation sheet

☐ See continuation sheet for additional property types

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

☒ See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency

- ☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Specify repository: Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 1

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type: Dwelling

II. Description

Very few buildings associated with the formative era in the town's history (c. 1790-1859) have survived. In 1978, a reconnaissance survey of Prestonsburg conducted by Kenneth T. Gibbs and Lee Walker of the Kentucky Heritage Council documented only three sites dating from this period. The De Rossett House (FD-7) at 36 South Front Street was built c. 1815 by Solomon De Rossett, a French fur buyer. According to Henry Scalf, De Rossett came to Kentucky in the 1800's to purchase bear skins for Napoleon's army but decided to settle here permanently. Over time the De Rossett House's original log core was gradually altered, expanded and sheathed in weatherboarding. The inventory form prepared in 1978 depicts a two-story, five-bay, center-passage dwelling of symmetrical composition with a c. 1920's two-story gabled portico. Rectangular sidelights and double doors graced the front entry. The De Rossett House was severely damaged by fire in early 1985 and subsequently demolished.

Two years after De Rossett built his log dwelling, Samuel May built a much more substantial residence at the mouth of Abbott Creek north of Prestonsburg. May, who had moved here from Virginia in the early 1800's, was a farmer, building contractor, and operator of a mill. He was also active in politics and served in the state Legislature from 1832-1834 and the state Senate from 1835-1839. In 1842, after experiencing financial difficulties, he sold the house to his brother Thomas and traveled to the California goldfields where he died in 1851. The Samuel May House, the county's sole expression of the Federal style in brick, is still owned by descendants of the May family. It was listed in the National Register in 1980.

The Burns House (FD-3), located at the northwest corner of North Arnold Avenue and Friend Street, was built c. 1857. It faced a long-since-abandoned road that paralleled the river. The house's two-story, five-bay main block with brick gable-end chimneys was dominated by a two-story gabled portico, while a one-story ell with stone chimney adjoined the rear. The Burns House, listed in the Register in 1974, was demolished in the early 1980's.

Several dwellings survive from the Victorian era (c. 1860-1905). Most are concentrated near the river, along Front Street and South Arnold Avenue. Two types predominate: the T-plan cottage, one or one-and-a-half stories in height with hipped or gabled roof; and the I-house, two stories tall and three or five bays wide with center-passage plan and a side-gabled, or much less frequently, a truncated hip roof. The latter presented an adaptation of the basic house plan exemplified by both the De Rossett House (in its final, expanded form) and the Burns House. As in earlier years, frame construction was the norm: neither the 1978 or 1987 survey discovered any masonry

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 2

dwelling predating 1900 with the exception of the Samuel May House. Most of Prestonsburg's Victorian-era dwellings have endured insensitive alterations, many of which took place in the wake of a devastating 1957 flood. Such modifications included the addition of aluminum or vinyl siding and the removal of original porches, cornices or mouldings. Others have suffered from neglect and deferred maintenance.

A notable example of a Victorian-era I-house was presented by the Greenville Davidson House at 27 South Arnold Avenue (FD-4). This dwelling, built c. 1872, bore the distinction of being one of the city's oldest residences. The Davidson House, two stories high with a truncated hipped roof, corner pilasters and sawnwood rear gallery, featured a Colonial Revival fanlight doorway added in the early twentieth century. After years of neglect that rendered it structurally unsound, it was demolished in 1988. One of the city's more intact extant examples is the Ralph Booton House (FD-61) on Front Street, built c. 1885. The Booton House stands two stories high and five bays wide with a side-gabled roof that forms incomplete returns. Spindlework galleries extend along its two-story rear ell. The Booton House, vacant for many years and presently in deteriorated condition, has undergone alterations including the addition of replacement windows and removal of box gutters. The Salisbury House (FD-64), adjoining the Booton House on the north, is somewhat of an anomaly. Although its basic plan is similar to that of the Booton House and other Victorian dwellings in the city, it was extensively remodelled in the late nineteenth century. At this time a new wing was constructed and a hexagonal tower, clad in wood shingles of varied pattern, was added to its northwest corner. Recent remodellings have sheathed the body of the house in asbestos siding and stripped it of its Victorian-era porch.

The Fitzpatrick-Harmon House (FD-66) at 102 East Court Street is a three-bay, center-passage residence whose main block dates from the 1890's. A polygonal west addition was added at the turn of the century. Despite cosmetic alterations including the addition of a full-height portico, it remains the city's best-preserved Victorian dwelling.

A cluster of Victorian frame T-plan cottages, one-and-a-half-stories high with small inset entry porches, can be found on East Graham Street east of Central Avenue (FD-80). All have suffered numerous alterations including re-siding, window replacement, and porch remodellings. A particularly fine individual example is presented by 201 Maple Avenue (FD-8), a one-and-a-half-story cottage with gabled roof, cutaway bay, crossette mouldings and corner pilasters. It remains intact except for the replacement of its Tuscan porch posts (documented on the 1978 survey) with modern ones of wrought-iron. Two surviving T-plan houses of larger scale can also be found standing two stories high with steeply-pitched hipped roofs (FD-55). Both have been severely altered, one by the addition of aluminum siding and removal of details, and the other by a modern brick veneer.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 3

During the early twentieth century the city's housing stock became more diverse. There was a new emphasis on style, and the American Foursquare and Homestead modes gained in popularity, supplementing the designs that had been the norm in earlier years. More expensive materials, including pressed or wire-cut brick, cut sandstone, and tile, slate and pressed-metal shingle roofing, came into use. Some of the city's more elaborate homes also featured windows of leaded or beveled glass.

The early 1900's also saw the construction of several large and impressive homes for the town's leading citizens. Perhaps the most elaborate was the Walter S. Harkins House (no longer extant) on the east side of South Arnold Avenue south of West Court Street. This grand home in the Queen Anne style, larger by far than any that had preceded it, was constructed of brick and sandstone and featured a corner tower. The house was surrounded by a wrought-iron fence and was sited on a large lot complete with such unheard-of amenities as a greenhouse and a carriage house. Local tradition attributes the design of the Harkins House to "a Cincinnati architect" whose name has not yet been learned. In 1905 an ornate frame residence in the Queen Anne Free Classic mode was built on South Arnold Avenue for a man from Virginia named Colonel May (FD-5). During the last years of World War I, attorney and politician Andrew Jackson ("A. J.") May built a large home of wire-cut brick in the Foursquare-Craftsman style on North Arnold Avenue (FD-65).

Most of the city's American Foursquare residences date from c. 1905-1915 and employ variations of the same basic plan; they stand two stories high and two or three bays wide with a full-width front porch and a pyramidal or hipped roof featuring roof dormers on each elevation. Colonial Revival doorway treatments, with multi-pane sidelights and transom, were common enhancements to these dwellings, as were Craftsman-inspired exposed rafter tails, overhanging eaves, and window designs. Examples of the American Foursquare include 202 Central Avenue (FD-79), built of wire-cut brick with a roof of pressed-metal shingles and Craftsman windows. The Cottrell and May Houses at 24 and 26 South Arnold Avenue (FD-75) are companion dwellings of somewhat larger scale, featuring wrap-around verandas borne by Tuscan columns, leaded glass windows, and restrained Colonial Revival detailing. The Annie Allen House (FD-52) on North Lake Drive opposite City Hall is notable for its use of rough-cut locally-quarried sandstone as a building material.

The most stylish example of the American Foursquare in Prestonsburg is the c. 1917 May-Latta House (FD-65) at 33 North Arnold Avenue. Although a number of the city's Foursquare dwellings hint at the Arts and Crafts movement, the May-Latta House is the only dwelling in the city in which this is fully developed.

Prestonsburg's Homestead houses (c. 1905-1915), on the other hand, are plainer and less varied. Most stand two stories high and two bays wide with a steeply-pitched front gabled roof. Some feature roof dormers on side

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 4

elevations. Full-width front porches are common elements. Nearly all of the city's Homestead Houses utilize frame construction and exhibit minimal ornamentation. Perhaps the city's best-preserved example is the Harmon Rent House (FD-66), located behind the Fitzpatrick-Harmon House on the east side of

College Lane north of Court Street. It is sheathed in clapboards and features a raised-seam metal roof and a veranda carried by tapered wooden posts. Incomplete returns accent the front gable. 104 East Graham Street (FD-80) is noteworthy for its unusually decorative front porch of brick and pressed-concrete block, probably added in the 1920's. Another interesting example, smaller in scale, can be found on the east side of Highland Avenue north of Court Street (FD-82). Gables with incomplete returns are featured on each elevation. This house's lower story is faced with pressed concrete block and its gables with asbestos shingles.

Simple cottage dwellings, small in scale, continued to be built during the early 1900's. One or one-and-a-half stories in height, they follow a T-plan or modified hall-parlor form with entry porches and either a hipped or gabled roof. Ornamentation is confined to classically-inspired porch posts or exposed roofline rafter tails. These modest weatherboarded dwellings utilize corrugated metal roofing and rest on foundations of concrete block or brick, the above-grade portion of the latter often covered with pressed-metal siding. Good examples of early twentieth century cottages, intermingled with more recent dwellings, can be found along lower Central and Maple Avenues south of Richmond Street (FD-79). A series of one-and-a-half dwellings with front-gabled roofs and full-width porches can be seen along the east side of North Arnold Avenue, opposite the West Prestonsburg Bridge approach (FD-77).

Beginning in the 1920's, the bungalow became the predominant building type in Prestonsburg. Most followed the familiar "box bungalow" form and stood one-and-a-half stories high with gently-sloping side-gabled roof, gabled or shed dormers, and full-width porches sheltered by the front slope of the roof. In some cases, these porches were partly enclosed to create solariums. Facades were three bays wide and symmetrical, with a central doorway. Although wire-cut brick was the most common building material, some were covered in clapboards and a few utilized rough-cast stucco. Roofline knee braces or rafter tails were common embellishments, and a few featured more fanciful touches such as wooden shutters with decorative cut-out designs. A few bungalows, like those found on the north side of East Graham Street (FD-80), display hipped roofs. A few front-gabled examples can be seen along the east side of Highland Avenue (FD-82). Rows of intact box bungalows can be observed along the north side of West Graham Street between South Lake Drive and South Arnold Avenue (FD-81), and on the north side of East Court Street east of Central Avenue (FD-1). A particularly fine example, all but untouched since its construction in the early 1930's, is presented by the Grover D. Callihan House at 105 West Graham Street (FD-67). Also noteworthy is the T. J. May House at 105 Maple Avenue (FD-56).

The box bungalow was distinguished from other types by its box-like form,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 5

unlike the more dramatic horizontality of the classic form; by its usable second story (which sometimes earned it the nickname of "semi-bungalow;" and by its relatively simple roof treatment, usually consisting of a side-gabled or hipped form with prominent dormers, lacking the multiple gables or complex series of intersecting planes that characterize the rooflines of other types.

Not all Prestonsburg's bungalows fit into the box bungalow mold. The Stephens House at 107 Maple Avenue (FD-54) is a locally rare example of the so-called "low-lying" bungalow that is distinctly horizontal in form. Although it suffers from deferred maintenance, the Stephens House has remained virtually intact since construction. Original details include a front-gabled brick porch borne by stout brick posts, grouped casement windows, roofline knee braces, and accent windows with beveled clear glass.

Several houses built during the 1920's exemplify the Colonial Revival style. 202 Maple Avenue (FD-53), a well-preserved two-story frame dwelling with gently-sloping pyramidal roof supported by large, scrolled brackets, exhibits finely-executed Colonial Revival detailing including a pedimented one-bay entry portico and multi-pane sash windows with original shutters. But its two-bay facade hints at a side-passage plan which is atypical of the style, but perhaps to be expected in this regional interpretation. The B. F. Combs House at 41 North Arnold Avenue (FD-68) is a high-style example, dating from 1922. Comparatively large in scale and dignified in aspect, it stands two-and-a-half stories high with flanking one-story wings, and exhibits a formal center-passage plan. A small Neo-Classical portico, borne by Tuscan columns, shelters the entranceway. The house was designed by architects Tyson and Foster of Ashland, Kentucky. Its portico, added at a somewhat later date, was executed by the firm of Archer and Dean Associates of Louisville, Kentucky and Huntington, West Virginia. It is interesting to note that the B. F. Combs House was only the second in the city's history known to have been designed by an architect. Although little has yet been learned of the work of either firm, further research may one day establish the house's place within a larger context.

The decade's architectural eclecticism also expressed itself in more exotic styles. A few examples of the Spanish Eclectic style were constructed, of which the most notable and best-preserved is the Joseph D. Harkins House (FD-69) at 204 North Arnold Avenue. The house, low and broad in form, is faced in swirled white stucco. Its hipped roof of Mission tile is partly concealed behind shaped parapet walls. Several homes of the 1920's exemplify the Tudor Revival style, including 106 West Graham Street (FD-80), a modest stucco-clad dwelling with cross-gabled facade.

Many houses of the 1920's also featured garages designed to imitate the dwelling on site, a pattern that can be observed at the Joseph D. Harkins and B. F. Combs residences, among others.

Although the pre-World War II era formed the primary focus of the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 6

Prestonsburg survey, the post-World War II era produced at least one exceptional residence. The Spradlin House at 440 North Arnold Avenue (FD-70), built c. 1945, proved to be the city's first consciously "modern" dwelling and sole example of the International style. The house is asymmetric in form and cubic in massing with a flat roof and a central section rising two stories high. Curved walls, expanses of glass block, and strips of casement ribbon windows convey the modern impression.

III. Significance

Dwellings in Prestonsburg may be significant for their architectural or historic importance, or both. Architecturally significant dwellings may be notable as excellent examples of a locally popular building type or style. Others may be significant as unique properties, possessing an outstanding expression of a design unlike any other in the city. Historically significant dwellings may be notable for their associations with people, events or themes important in the development of the city. Often, residences of exceptional architectural design were also the homes of people of local historical significance and are the best-preserved surviving properties associated with such people.

IV. Registration Requirements

Setting, location - Prestonsburg's neighborhoods provide a setting that is intact in terms of setbacks, massing, and residential character. Since location is an important element of integrity, only dwellings on their original sites would be considered significant.

Design, workmanship, materials - These elements of integrity are essential in evaluating the significance of residential properties. Architecturally or historically significant properties must retain those features characteristic of their particular type, period or style. These features include formal elements such as plan, massing, roofline, and window configuration, as well as structural elements such as exterior materials, windows, and box gutters. They should also retain most of their original applied ornament including cornices, window and door surrounds, trimboards, pilasters, and porches. Since virtually every old building has undergone some type of alteration, alterations to a building's decorative fabric would have to be evaluated on an individual basis according to each property's particular type, style and period. Often, fragile materials become damaged by lack of maintenance or normal wear and tear and consequently are replaced. This is most often the case with roofing materials or porch elements such as balustrades or posts. Such alterations would have to be evaluated on an individual basis to determine their impact. For example, a Victorian-era house may lose its slate roof if that roof is not a crucial element of its design. On the other hand,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 7

removal of a Craftsman house's overhanging eaves or a Spanish Eclectic house's tile roof would result in a severe loss of integrity. Because of the rarity of pre-1900 buildings in Prestonsburg, surviving dwellings of the Victorian era may endure more alterations to their decorative fabric, such as the removal of a porch or limited replacement of original doors or windows, without considerable loss of significance.

Feeling, association - These aspects of integrity will be present if its physical attributes--setting and location, design, workmanship and materials--exist. Integrity of feeling and association derives from the design integrity of a property.

Dwellings significant primarily for their architectural quality, or noteworthy under both architectural and historic criteria, must manifest a higher degree of integrity than those whose importance arises solely from historic criteria. However, the latter must still be recognizable as products of their time and place with original massing, roofline, window configuration and exterior materials undisturbed, and most of their decorative fabric intact.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 8**F. Associated Property Types****I. Commercial Building****I. Description.**

Prestonsburg's earliest commercial buildings, constructed prior to 1900, were appropriate for a town in the wilderness. They were small in stature, no more than two stories in height, utilized wood-frame construction with clapboard siding, and exhibited unadorned exteriors.

As town grew and prospered after the turn of the century, these early buildings were replaced by newer, and often, larger structures. Masonry construction became the norm after 1900, lending the business district a new air of permanence and solidity. Most commercial buildings constructed between 1900 and 1940 stood two to four stories high and three five bays wide, with low-pitched roofs hidden behind low parapets, and windows set in slightly recessed spandrels. With the exception of some single-story mercantile buildings, most were vertical in emphasis. Commercial buildings of this era were generally built of smooth-surface pressed brick, although at least one is known to have been built of cut stone. Although functional rather than stylish in aspect, these buildings were accented with cornice-line courses of corbeled brick; projecting piers or pilaster strips; or inset stone plaques inscribed with the original owner's name, the date of construction, or both. Storefront treatments were typical of the early twentieth century, displaying the standard three-part configuration of transom, display window, and bulkhead. Shopfront windows displayed large expanses of plate glass, secured by narrow metal frames. Transoms featured panes of leaded, prism or, in later examples, frosted glass, and bulkheads were faced with ceramic tile. An interesting feature of some of these buildings was a projecting wrought-iron balcony at second-story level, extending out over the sidewalk. The earliest documented commercial building in Prestonsburg is the former Hutsinpiller Drug Store building, constructed 1909. The Richmond Building (1914) on Front Street is a virtually unaltered example of a pre-World War I commercial building, intact even to the faded advertising signs painted on its side elevations. Other good examples, with altered shopfronts but intact upper stories, include the Hughes Building, Combs Building, and Elizabeth Hotel, located on the west side of Front Street opposite the Richmond Building. (The Richmond, Hughes, Combs and Elizabeth buildings are described in greater detail on the nomination form for the Front Street Historic District.)

Although most buildings were not stylish, at least three offered exceptions to this rule. The Harkins Law Office Building at 1 South Arnold Avenue (FD-2), constructed in 1914, is a monumental Neo-Classical building of imposing presence, built of smooth-faced sandstone ashlar with pedimented full-height portico. (For more information, see individual nomination form.) Two years later The Bank Josephine's new edifice at the northeast corner of Front and

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 9

West Court Streets employed a less robust and more conservative classicism. A third building, no longer standing, employed a design that was surprisingly sophisticated given its early construction date. The First National Bank, located opposite the Bank Josephine, was built in 1904. Built of brick, it stood two stories high with a pyramidal roof partly concealed by gabled wall dormers with stone copings. Recessed panels and contrasting brickwork, and fanlights centered in the dormers, added interest to its wall surfaces.

Notable commercial properties of a different sort included two filling stations built by the Pure Oil Company in the 1920's. Of these, one survives on South Lake Drive (FD-73). Its design emulated the "cottage" vernacular of the era and featured a steeply-pitched gabled roof of bright blue tile, crowned by a copper cupola and weathervane.

The basic design of Prestonsburg's commercial buildings changed little during the 1930's. The facades of later buildings tend toward a more planar surface, without the three-dimensional quality created by the projecting cornices and corbeled brickwork of the earlier examples. Metal casement windows replaced the earlier wooden sash, and hanging neon signs came into use. The Depression era also introduced a new concept in storefront design, popularized by the "Modernize Main Street" movement. Although no high-style or streamlined treatments were undertaken, several storefronts were retrofitted with panels of opaque Vitrolite or Carrera glass at transom and bulkhead level and along the outer edges of the now-smaller display windows. Good examples of intact commercial buildings of the 1930's are presented by the Odd Fellows Building (1931) on Front Street (described in the Front Street Historic District form) and the former Carter automobile dealership (FD-62) on South Lake Drive. The Morell Building (FD-1) on West Court Street is intact above the storefront level.

The 1940's saw the advent of a radical new style; Art Moderne. The Meader-Allen Building (FD-60), built in 1940, is the city's showcase example of the style. Faced with yellow brick, adorned with glass block and curved display windows, it presents a startling contrast to the more staid architecture of downtown Prestonsburg. In the following decade two more buildings, the Strand Theater Block and an auto dealership, also utilized the Art Moderne mode.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 10

III. Significance

Commercial properties, like residential buildings, have the potential to be significant for their architectural quality, their historic importance, or both. Architecturally significant properties are noteworthy for their high artistic values. They may be important as largely intact examples of distinctive, locally popular building types. Or, less frequently, they may represent styles rarely seen in Prestonsburg and thus possess a unique aesthetic character. Commercial buildings may also achieve significance through the people, businesses or entities that occupied them. Such buildings may be the best surviving properties associated with prominent residents of the town or with businesses or institutions whose contribution to the development of the city has been well documented. Many commercial properties are significant under both historic and architectural criteria, as buildings whose architectural distinction attests to the importance of their occupants.

In addition to their individual significance, commercial properties have the potential to be significant as part of a historic district, a cluster of similar buildings related by function and physical proximity. In order for a district to be considered architecturally significant, it must constitute a distinguishable entity with clearly defined boundaries, and must possess a high degree of integrity relative to surrounding business blocks. Individual buildings within the district must retain integrity under all or most of its seven aspects as defined in Section IV, Registration Requirements. Business blocks also can achieve significance as important representations of past eras in the city's development.

IV. Registration Requirements

Setting, location: The setting in downtown Prestonsburg is intact in terms of setback, massing, and architectural diversity. Since integrity of location is an important aspect of the overall integrity of a property, only buildings on their original sites would be considered significant.

Design, workmanship, materials: These elements of integrity are essential in evaluating the importance of architecturally significant commercial properties. In general, commercial buildings must retain all the design elements characteristic of their style or type. But in the case of storefront buildings, a more flexible standard must be applied. Since many storefronts were remodelled periodically to accomodate changes in taste, and intact period shopfronts are rare, the ground floors of such properties can sustain alterations without loss of overall significance. In most cases storefront remodellings involved the application of new materials over the old, especially at the transom and bulkhead level, as well as new signage; new display windows, frequently smaller than the originals, may also have been

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number F Page 11

installed. The storefront's original three-part configuration, however, would still be recognizeable. Such modest renovations often took place during the first few decades of the building's existence. In some cases storefront alterations may have achieved historic significance in their own right and would thus contribute to the building's overall significance. In more extreme cases the entire storefront material may have been replaced with a new one or have been completely concealed behind new materials. Such alterations, which often resulted in a jarring visual juxtaposition, usually took place at a later date in the building's existence when it building may have begun to appear "out-of-date."

Because of the prevalence of altered storefronts, commercial buildings whose original shopfronts had lost integrity would still be considered to retain integrity of design, workmanship and materials if their upper stories were left intact. In such cases the building's roofline must be unchanged and its exterior material still visible, not obscured by modern siding or paneling. Its original window systems must be left in place and windows still visible. Decorative elements such as ornamental brickwork, plaques or cornices must be preserved. Modern additions, if present, should respect the scale and massing of the original structure and defer to it.

Feeling, association: These abstract aspects of integrity are present if its concrete attributes--design, workmanship, materials--exist.

Properties significant for architectural quality alone must manifest a greater degree of integrity than those whose importance arises solely from historic criteria. However, such properties must still be recognizeable as products of their particular time and place. Their original design must still be evident although some of its elements may be missing or compromised.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number G Page 1

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The historic resources of Prestonsburg were surveyed during 1987 and 1988 by preservation consultant Margaret Warminski under contract to the Kentucky Heritage Council, the State Historic Preservation Office. The survey recorded unaltered buildings over 50 years of age. An "unaltered" building was defined as one that was still clearly recognizable as a product of its time and place, one whose original plan, scale, massing, fenestration and materials, and most of its details, were still intact. Because of their comparative rarity, buildings constructed before 1900 were recorded even if they had sustained major alterations.

Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory Forms were used to record information on 34 individual properties in the town. Data about each building's physical setting and architectural type, style, massing, and details were included on the forms, as well as historical information, an assessment of the property's integrity, and a statement of its significance in the local context. Four clusters of buildings of similar plan, style and use were recorded on Neighborhood Inventory Forms which focused on the overall characteristics of the blockscape, its setbacks, massing and overall integrity, period of construction, prevalent building styles, types and materials. One site number was assigned per neighborhood.

Research materials included oral interviews with Prestonsburg residents and deed records in the Floyd County Courthouse. A set of fire insurance maps prepared by the Sanborn Map Company in 1926 provided useful information. Two narrative histories of the area were also consulted.

Two surveyed properties appear to be potentially eligible for the National Register potential but need further research to establish their place in a city-wide or, preferably, an area-wide context. These include the former Pure Oil Station (FD-73) and the former Prestonsburg High School building (FD-74). Three other properties do not meet the 50-year requirement and require further research to determine whether "exceptional significance" was warranted. These include the O. V. Turner Suspension Bridge (FD-76), Meade-Allen Building (FD-60), and Spradlin House (FD-70).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

APR 24 1989

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Section number H Page 1

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Prestonsburg, Kentucky

APR 24 1989

Section number H Page 2

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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